Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0332TX-1 for Teneha ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	**10**	**2**

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A Schools Consortium clearly describes the five small school districts including the number of teachers employed and students enrolled. Though implementation of the Individual Plus Value (IPV) Plan is discussed as the reform vision, the applicant does not adequately address the four core educational assurance areas outlined in the absolute priority.

- The vision does not address adopting content standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college, the workplace and compete in the global economy. No discussion of the Texas State Standards or the State's public universities admission requirements are offered.
- The purpose of the IPV is provided as a method to chart student growth and monitor vertical alignment but no articulation of a clear and credible approach to implementation of goals regarding student achievement, deepening student learning or increasing equity through personalized student support is discussed.
- This section lacks clarity as to how the IPV will build on existing work in the Consortium Districts.

This element is scored in the low range (2)

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	**10**	**6**

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A Schools Consortium provides significant demographic information for each of the five participating districts.

- The eligibility criteria is met based on the 69.5% of the student are economically disadvantage, met the rural school district eligibility and each district in the Consortium has less than 1000 students.
- The applicant proposes that 75% of graduating students will graduate from college in 2016-2017, but does not define the reform initiative or how their approach to implementation will support high-quality LEA-level and school level implementation.
- All schools across each district will participate.
- A chart is provided with the number of participating educators and students, including the required subgroup numbers.
- The total number of participating students from low-income families and high-needs students from across all consortium districts is compelling when considering the impact for the school and community. The applicant sufficiently responded to the main components of this section.

This element is scored in the mid-range range (6)

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A Schools Consortium did not respond to this component in this section.

- Though all schools in all districts in the Consortium are participating, the applicant did not provide a high quality plan that describes how outcomes will be translated into meaningful reform to support change, achieve, and sustain outcome goals.
- There is no model or theory on how the plan will improve student learning outcomes for all students served by the applicant.
- Without a high quality plan, the vision of the reform proposal will lack clarity, cohesiveness and a common direction by all members of the Consortium, including teachers, principals, students and community stakeholders.

Though the applicant did not provide clear evidence of all components in this section, there was some reference as to how the plan will improve student learning found in section (B)(1), which indicates that each district in the consortia will help the other districts and the higher education partners will help all of the districts reach the outcome goals.

Low range (3)

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas A1 Consortium provides charts which address the four areas by subgroup as required in this section.

- Performance on summative assessments is provided with PK-12 goals of 10 percent each year in mathematics, reading and other subjects depending on grade level. The applicant does not provide a plan describing how these goals of 10% growth each year will be met.
- Though the applicant has demonstrated significant progress in closing the achievement gap according to the data provided, a description of how the strong gains for both African American and Hispanic students were achieved is not discussed. Comparison data were not provided for non-Hispanic and non-African American students and could contribute to decisions as to whether the goals are ambitious.
- The applicant plans to continue its current 100% high school graduation rates for all subgroups but did not discuss how this has been achieved and the plan to continue to achieve positive results. Additionally, the applicant's definition of high school graduation is lacking considering there are also certificates of attendance.
- The applicant plans to increase college enrollment significantly to 75% of the graduating class. A plan is not provided on how the applicant with achieve this ambitious goal.
- The applicant plans to follow alumni and determine post-secondary degree attainment. The applicant does not provide a plan for how the alumni contact will be initiated and maintained over the grant period and beyond.
- The applicant fails to provide a fully developed narrative with goals, activities and timelines.

This element is scored in the mid-range range (3)

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	**15**	**9**

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas A1 Consortium districts have demonstrated a record of graduation success of 100 percent since the class of 2008.

- The applicant provides State data in the form of ratings, such as Academically Acceptable, Exemplary and other ratings, in a narrative format. The applicant does not include charts or graphs, raw student data, or other forms of data presentation.
- According to the data provided, the achievement gaps have been closed for high school graduation. However, high school graduation is not defined for the districts nor is there information on the reforms that resulted in closing the gaps in high school graduation.
- According to the Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System, there have been strengths and weaknesses in specific subject areas. For example, one of the districts received an Academically Unacceptable rating for 2011 with the belief that the high numbers of non-English speaking students who moved into the district had an effect on the rating. This rating was addressed by increasing the number of ESL classes based on the belief of the district decision makers.
- The applicant provides limited information on low performing and low achieving schools and how they have used data to make decisions. However, they make data available through a student portal provided by the State and a parent portal provided by the district. It is unclear how parents without access to technology can get to student data.

Score middle (9)

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Texas A1 Consortium provides limited evidence of transparency in the Appendix included. They indicate the evidence can be accessed through the district websites. Though the personnel salaries are provided and broken out by all required categories for each district, The following evidence is not provided in the Appendix.

- Non-personnel expenditures at the school level are not provided.
- School administration expenditures are not provided.
- Per pupil expenditures are not provided.
- The district budget is not provided.

Med Score 2

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	**10**	**7**

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates each district has autonomy from state statues or regulations further indicating that school boards can make decisions in the best interest of personalized student goals. Evidence is verified by inclusion of MOUs.

- An additional barrier is also eliminated because LEAs can link student achievement to teacher performance which is not yet possible in many states for various reasons.
- The applicant does not provide how autonomy has supported past reform efforts, but does indicate there have been challenges that will be addressed. The applicant will address these challenges through creating personal learning goals for each student and reviewing subgroup data.
- The consortium districts have an advantage in that they can move forward with making improvements without district level barriers. Additionally, the ability to link student achievement data with teacher performance can provide opportunities to support struggling teachers so that they become highly effective.

Mid score 7

Mid-score 5

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	5

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The East Texas A1 Consortium describes meetings held with stakeholders including school board members and teachers. The school board minutes, though not included as evidence, is cited as verification.

- The proposal did not include an adequate description of how students, families, teachers and principals were engaged in the development of the proposal or how feedback was included in revisions. The applicant does not describe a means of collecting feedback through surveys, focus groups or open meetings. There is also no indication that information from school board minutes was considered in how the proposal may have been revised.
- The Consortium provides teacher signatures in the Appendix for each consortium district as evidence of teacher support.
- There was limited evidence of stakeholder engagement in the development of the proposal beyond meetings and stakeholders were not listed.
- The East Texas A1 Consortium is not a collective bargaining State.
- Though the applicant stresses the importance of stakeholder engagement and indicates numerous meetings took place, only one letter of support was included in the application.

Score Mid 5

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Though needs and gaps have been identified as math and reading, there is no evidence of how the consortium has determined and linked specific needs of some subgroups. For example, the applicant indicates that Hispanic students only need ESL classes and African American students need extended hours, online computer remediation math programs and increased rigor. The assumptions are not based on evidence and indicate a lack of analysis of needs and gaps.

- There is no evidence that strategies discussed have been proven to work before nor are there other supports discussed that will be needed in order for them to work.
- The proposal relies heavily on the most current technology but does not address how students will have access to computers outside of school.

- Each school district in the Consortium delineates goals for closing the achievement gap, but minimal documentation is offered to support the current status in implementing personalized learning communities.
- Though some districts indicate there has been improvements due to various interventions, no real evidence is provided.
- IPV is described as the applicant's intervention, however, it is unclear how IPV will be implemented.

Middle score (2)

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	**20**	**5**

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(1) East Texas A1 Consortium does not provide a plan that addresses personalizing the learning environment to support all students to graduate college and career ready across participating districts. For example, there is discussion about Professional Learning Communities, a challenging STEM curriculum, Personalized Learning and IPV, but it is not sufficiently linked a cohesive plan for improving learning.

- The approach to learning that each district will use is not fully developed and inclusive of specific instructional strategies.
- The idea of using mentors and making parents full partners is an excellent approach but lacks depth and specific strategies for how this will happen.
- Several areas such as diversity, engaging and empowering students, parents, and educators, and accommodations are mentioned but not sufficiently developed.
- The applicant indicates that support for students to graduate college and be career ready includes ESL classes, extended hours, online computer access, remediation, increasing rigor in math classes, strengthening CTE Clusters, access to technology, disaggregation of data, purchasing personal computer labs, reading specialists, and IPV plan. It is unclear how these components will be linked to specific student needs and the creation of a personalized environment for each student.
- Only one district in the consortium mentions increasing rigor in courses, but no discussion is provided on the supports that will be needed when rigor is increased, such as tutors, mentors, and professional development for teachers.
- No plan is provided for how the consortium districts will structure learning for achievement and measure progress.
- The Consortium districts provide much discussion regarding technology access as part of their plan, but do not adequately address high quality content and digital content to support learning through technology and no mechanism is discussed to provide training and support to students to ensure they understand how to use the technology.
- The Consortium does not detail high quality instructional approaches nor is there a plan described to offer professional development for teacher and administrators in any of the districts.
- Ongoing feedback, accommodations and self-guidance are all key elements for a successful plan, however, none of these salient elements are discussed in this section.

Score (5)

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	**20**	**6**

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(C)(2) East Texas A1 Consortium does not sufficiently address training or professional development for all educators to support student progress toward meeting college and career ready standards or college career ready graduation requirements.

- There is a plan to measure student progress three times per year, but no discussion regarding use of teacher evaluation data already available and in place in each district. The application lacks clarity on teachers' access to tools and resources to accelerate student progress.
- Various programs are discussed, for example, Standards Based Instruction, but training for educators is not described.
- The applicant mentions that students will meet their academic needs though proposal components, but does not offer a clear plan for how this will be done.
- Based on the applicant's model and use of Tiers 1-3, all students will receive the same instruction in the beginning and those who need help will receive additional help. Use of smaller groups is recommended as a component to address adaptation of content and instruction.
- Frequent measures of student progress will include beginning, middle and end of the year check points. The applicant may want to consider more frequent measurement in order to provide intervention earlier using feedback from educators for improvement, which is not discussed in the plan.
- There is a lack of evidence that indicates educators will have access to use tools, data and resources to accelerate student progress. However, there is a line in the budget indicating resources will be purchased.
- Actionable information that help teachers identify the best learning approaches for student academic needs and interests is not provided making it difficult for educators to access high quality learning resources to match student needs.
- The districts all have teacher evaluations systems, but how leaders will use information from the evaluations to support teacher improvement of their effectiveness is not addressed.
- The applicant does not adequately address how they will increase the number of students across various specialty areas and in hard to staff schools get more effective teachers and principals.

Score (6)

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	**15**	**11**

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The structure for the consortium will be individual governance for each district and leadership teams have flexibility at the school level. The applicant indicates there are policies that will enable the districts to be more effective in implementation of goals and objectives, such as students participating in the development of the policies, looking at attendance and tardiness from an individual student perspective.

- Opportunities for students to progress at their own pace is not fully addressed, nor is the opportunity for mastery at multiple times in multiple ways described. The applicant does not provide a plan that includes how often and what specific strategies will be used to individualize learning and enable students to move on when ready.
- The school infrastructure is adequately discussed and lends itself to supporting the goals and activities of the consortium. The consortium governance structure will rely on each district's individual governance and flexibility

granted to school leadership teams to supports grant efforts.The technology infrastructure is not already in place for districts, no timeline is suggested as to how this will unfold. The LEA Central office for each district in the consortium is not addressed.

- The data system meets the interoperable requirement and contains all components.
- A system referred to as DMAC is used by all consortium districts and will adequately address the sharing of data for the purposes of exporting data to use for student program improvement. Several systems are mentioned such as State Assessment, TEKScore, STAAR, and CAP software. However, there is no evidence these systems s have been effectively used to support implementation of district initiatives.
- In other areas of the proposal, the applicant discusses giving students the opportunity to dually enroll in college courses, however, there is no discussion of allowing student to move on when ready once they demonstrate mastery.
- The applicant's plan does not include provision of learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and accessible for students with disabilities or English Learners.

Mid Score 11

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	**10**	**2**

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant is vague on how the districts' infrastructure will support personalized learning.

- The plan does not address how students and parents will have access to necessary content, tools and other learning resources in school and after school to support the proposal. Inclusion of this component is essential to facilitating personalized learning and encourages parents and students to take responsibility for learning by accessing and using resources that are available to them.
- Considering the extensive emphasis on technology in the proposal, appropriate levels of technical support for parents and students is lacking in the plan. As students are typically more technology saavy than their parents and can benefit from a wide variety of available tools , it is critical to ensure that the parent are included and engaged in this component of the plan. Additionally, as this project relies heavily on technology, without adequate support the program risk being unsuccessful.
- Although the applicant indicates that there are early monitoring systems that provide alerts on student progress, there is no description of how this information can be used by parents and students in other electronic learning systems to support personalized student learning. The application does not provide a plan for parents and students who may have limited access to technology.
- The applicant provides evidence that the districts and schools have access to interoperable data systems, for example, the DMAC system used across all five districts.

Low 2

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**3**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant indicates that programs are monitored on a regular basis, however, it is unclear how often regular means.

- It is mentioned that teachers and administrators will meet on a monthly basis and complete a yearly survey. The applicant has not indicated what information will be included on the surveys and how it will be aligned with the

continuous improvement process. Strategies are not provided for continuous improvement after the term of the grant. For example, the information gathered from the surveys could be used to better develop this section, ensure transparency and garner continued support for the grant efforts beyond the funding.

- The program evaluation for the proposal is not developed. A program evaluation component will ensure fidelity of implementation and demonstrate how districts can impact students, families and the community by having a laser focus on continuous improvement.
- The application lacks clarity on the monitoring process and how the information will be used for ongoing corrections and to inform program improvements. For example, the applicant describes how teachers and administrators will meet on a monthly basis to discuss and evaluate the effectivenes of the programs, but there is no discussion on how or when the new information will be integrated into the improvement plan. The monitoring process is critical to the success of the proposal and should include timelines for making adjustments and specifying the responsible person for following up on adjustments.
- Newspaper and radio publicity are appropriate means of communicating to stakeholders and is included in the application.

Score (5)

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	**5**	**3**

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant will designate one person from the lead district to provide both internal and external communications with the five districts. Each of the five districts also designated a contact person.

- Surveys and other evaluation instruments, yet to be designed, are mentioned in the narrative as methods of informing and engaging stakeholders, but limited information is provided to describe this process.
- External stakeholders are not specifically addressed in the application; however, the applicant did indicate that they will use local media to keep stakeholders aware of improvements as a result of the grant funds. They anticipate sharing survey and evaluative data as well as soliciting information from stakeholders.

Mid-range score 3

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	**5**	**3**

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant includes performance measures by sub-groups with the required annual targets. Performance measures include PK-12.

- The rational for selecting the performance measures is based on district data. Some performance measures remain steady and the same across the grant years, for example, the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup whose teacher of record and principal are reported as highly effective for two subgroups. The same is true for effective teacher and principals.
- Rigorous, timely, and formative leading information regarding implementation success or areas of concern is not discussed.
- The applicant does not include how they will review and implement improvements overtime if there are areas of concern and a need to gauge progress.
- The number of performance measures identified meet the requirement of the application. Considering the baseline for student performance measure across the project, they are ambitious yet acheivable. An example of how the

consortium has shown significant achievement is the increase in graduation rates of high school students in some districts.

Mid- score 2

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	**5**	**0**

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

This section on evaluating effectiveness of investments is a critical component of the proposal but is omitted. It is necessary to have a plan to evaluate all components of the proposal. The applicant did not submit this component, therefore evaluation of professional development provided to teachers and principals cannot be determined.

- The applicant plans to provide students, parents, and teachers with access to technology to improve student performance but there is no evaluation of this component to determine impact.
- The applicant does not indicate how it will determine if there was productive use of time, staff, or funds invested to improve results over the five districts, throughout the project cycle.
- The applicant does not address evaluation of the plan's impact on working with community partners, compensation reform or modification of school structures that will support program effectiveness.
- The applicant does not address the evaluation of effectiveness of leadership teams at the district and school levels and the impact of their decision-making structure.

Low Score(0)

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**3**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not sufficiently describe the plan and how it will be implemented. Therefore it is unclear as to whether the budget is reasonable and sufficient to support development and implementation.

- Only RTT funds are included in the budget, no additional funds are listed as supporting the project, though there is mention of other state grants such as Target Technology of Texas, Rural Technology Grant, Texas Literacy Initiative Grant, Technology Lending Program Grant in other sections of the proposal.
- Each district has offered and substantiated their needs and they are outlined in the budget. It is noted that some of the staff salaries are out of range with current teacher salaries.
- Professional development for teacher and principals is not adequately addressed in these districts: Laneville, Tenaha, Mt. Enterprise
- Though the plan and implementation lack clarity, funds used for onetime investments vs those to be used for ongoing operational cost focus on strategies for long term sustainability; most consortium districts are investing in long term sustainability, including, technology infrastructure and career ready environments.

Mid Score 3

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	**10**	**2**

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant references the Leadership, Assessment, Standards-based instruction, Effective instructional framework, Reporting and accountability, Sustainability) LASERS approach as having a built in sustainability component, but the approach is not adequately defined or aligned with the applicant's plan. There is an expressed commitment to sustainability; however, the applicant does not include a real sustainability plan in the budget.

- One of the major tenants of the LASERS approach is sustainable reform in literacy instruction with the school leadership at the center. Since literacy is a focus of the proposal, further development of the LASERS approach would ensure sustainability of the project's goals after the term of the grant. Training for teachers and administrators would also enhance the implementation of the LASERS approach. Additionally, the applicant might include information on the impact of the LASERS approach in similar settings with matched demographics.
- Major support from school board and superintendents is mentioned but there is no reference to support from State and local government support and no evidence included.
- The applicant did not include a budget for the three years after the term of the grant.

Low score (2)

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**2**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The difficulty of developing and sustaining partnerships is discussed but no specific strategies are offered to overcome this hurdle. It is also noted that no letters of support were provided from community service organizations.

- The Texas A1 Consortium has not fully developed an adequate plan as described in Absolute Priority 1, however the information in the competitive preference priority does support the applicants plan as it is written.
- Ten population level desired results for students were identified with some duplication. Both educational results and educational outcomes are provided.
- It is unclear how selected indicators will be tracked.
- How data will be used to target resources in order to improve results for participating students is not addresses in this section.
- No specific strategy to scale a model is provided with the exception of the will of the districts.
- The applicant does not address how they will improve results over time for participating students.
- The applicant discussed a plan for integrating Head Start and higher education institutions as a part of the function of the partnership.
- Building the capacity of the staff in participating schools is not thoroughly addressed and no discussion of professional development. There is no plan for assessing the needs of students as aligned with partnership goals for improving education or family and community supports that are targeted.
- The applicant does not discuss the creation of a decision making process and infrastructure to select, implement and evaluate student supports.
- Though it is mentioned that the parents and community assist the districts in many ways, there is no plan for systematically engaging parents and families in both decision making and addressing student and family needs.
- The applicant identified performance measures and they elected to use the same measures as those described in Section (E)(3)
- The desired results and type of results for students is adequately described.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

Absolute priority 1: The Texas A1 Consortium made an effort to address all of the components of Absolute Priority 1 and also wrote a specific section. Absolute Priority 1 cuts across the application and is not to be addressed separately.

- The Consortium is planning to adopt the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards.
- The IPV component address data systems that measure student growth, inform teachers and principals with data about how they can improve instruction. However, they did not fully address how data will be used to improve instruction.
- The applicant did address giving teacher an opportunity to get additional credentials but did not fully address recruitment, professional development, rewarding and retaining effective teachers and principals in the schools that need them the most.
- The applicant does address an effort to turn around low performing schools.
- The applicant addressed personalization of strategies, tools and supports in addition to aligning them with college and career ready standards.
- The other areas addressed include: accelerating student achievement, increasing effectiveness of educators, increasing student achievement across sub-groups and increasing graduation rates from high school

The applicant met the absolute priority by addressing the four core educational assurances areas necessary to create personalized learning for the students across the five school districts in the Consortium. They are also poised to fully adopt college and career ready standards and offer dual course enrollment to high school students. The dual course enrollment will avail some students to a more rigorous curriculum and build confidence that the goal of entering and graduating from college is achievable. The Consortium is focused on decreasing achievement gaps across all subgroups, preparing students for the option of a career or college, and maintaining a past record of 100% graduation.

MET

Total	**210**	**79**

Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0

Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments:

No optional budget provided.

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0332TX-2 for Teneha ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	**10**	**4**

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The districts that compose East Texas 1A express an ambitious vision for improving education for the populations they serve.

- The consortium wishes to promote an appreciation for education amongst East Texans.
- East Texas 1A expresses a commitment to college and career readiness.
  - Through the Race to the Top Grant the East Texas 1A Schools Consortium would like to create a world-class education system that gives students the knowledge and skills that will allow them to be successful in college and the workforce and flourish as parents and citizens; to create a culture in East Texas that understands the value of education; to adopt the Texas College and Career Readiness standards, working through the timeline to implement the standards and aligned assessments and ensuring that all teachers and leaders have the requisite training and continued professional support for implementing the standards and assessment. The Consortium is committed to providing a first-rate educational system that will promote college enrollment with an emphasis on retaining students in postsecondary education efforts to increase the number of East Texans who obtain a postsecondary degree, as well as to prepare our students for various career pathways.
- In particular, they intend to improve student achievement through the use of Individual Plus Value Plans (IPVs).
- They anticipate that IPVs will chart and measure student progress from year to year, and monitor vertical alignment in the districts' curriculum.

The consortium does not explicitly detail how they will build a data system.

- There is not an explicit discussion of how the accumulated data will be used to inform principals and teachers, and help them improve instruction.

With specific reference to RTTT-D goals, there is a limited discussion on and strategies for

- producing students who are globally competitive
- turning around low-achieving schools
- accelerating achievement
- deepening learning

Therefore, while East Texas 1A expresses an ambitious vision for the population it serves, and identifies a strategy for monitoring student growth, it does not provide a comprehensive and coherent reform vision that is aligned with all the requirements of this competition.

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	**10**	**6**

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Texas 1A proposes to implement Individual Plus Value Plans to reform education within the five school districts that the consortium serves.

The members of the consortium seem to have a clear appreciation for the challenges that one another faces in their individual schools. They believe

- all have high numbers of economically disadvantaged students who require more instruction and remedial assistance to attain the same academic levels of middle class students
- all five districts have similar demographics: rural; under 1000 PK-12 students
- a desire that their students be college and/or career ready upon graduation

This understanding motivates them to collaborate in finding solutions to their common problems; it also constitutes their description of the process they used to select participating schools.

Lists of signatures from educators in the five districts are provided in support of the application; these lists give an indication of the numbers of participating educators.

There is not a list identifying the names of all the individual schools participating.

There is not a discussion of how IPVs or the identified strategies within individual schools and districts will be implemented.

Since all districts will be using one common strategy of IPVs, there may some uniformity throughout the districts in charting and measuring student progress.

The requirements for this selection criterion have not been provided in sufficient detail.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	3

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

This is a low-medium quality plan.

This applicant is relying on the implementation of IPVs to realize reform in their district. Specifically, they hope to achieve an annual 10% increase in all state-mandated subject areas in every grade from PK-12.

East Texas 1A suggests that its consortium is district-wide, ie, all schools within each district are within the consortium; it is implied that this reform agenda will have district wide impact because all schools in the district are included in the reform.

There is not a discussion of their goal of a 10% increase in every subject area from PK-12 to assess the viability of this goal.

Distinct phases of the project also have not been identified and/or discussed: there is not a discussion of timelines, specific deliverables within particular timelines, and persons responsible for various aspects of the project.

Texas 1A suggests that its consortium is district-wide, therefore their reform agenda will have impact district-wide. While breadth of impact may be true, the depth or the quality and extent of the impact itself is not clearly established. The overall credibility of this plan is challenged because it is difficult to assess the extent to which there will be meaningful reform to scale up.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	3

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A provided tables indicating the growth they are projecting for each area listed under the requirement. These indicate ambitious annual goals.

- For example, they expect a 10% increase in performance on summative assessments each year in every state mandated subject area throughout PK-12.

They asserted that IPVs will help them realize the results projected, stating,

> By working on each individual student's performance using the IPV plan, the districts' will be improving performance on summative assessments, decreasing achievement gaps, and college enrollment rates. Since 2010 all five

districts have had a 100 percent graduation rate. By helping each student improve his/her performance in the classrooms and on state mandated assessments (PK- grade 12) we see no reason that all the goals will be meet for each subpopulation including the college readiness indicator.

This strategy indicated increased equity.

They further, and only, expanded their discussion on their graduation rates holding at 100%, leading to a discussion of college readiness and college enrollment. They maintained that

- graduation rates will hold at 100%
- College enrollment would increase with each district achieving the same result (50%, 60%, 70% 75%) each year of the grant rising to 75% by 2016-2017.
- college enrollment is affected by economic poverty within the districts, with students wanting to go to college but not being able to afford it
- college enrollment has improved with grant funds to help students pay for tuition, books and fees
- RTTD is expected to help them continue to prepare more students to be college-ready; more funds will also assist those who need it for college

East Texas 1A has been experiencing 100% graduation rates since 2010. Since they have been able to deliver strongly on graduation, despite the limitations of their context, It is reasonable to expect that the assiduous use of IPVs could support their record and projection of continued excellence.

It is possible that IPVs could realize student growth: setting, monitoring and measuring students' individual growth, combined with using the resulting data to inform interactions with and instruction for each student, should improve all students' performance.

- The extent to which one might expect uniformed growth, at 10%, as they project, each year in every state mandated subject area throughout PK-12, is perhaps uncertain. Their evidence shows, for example, that baseline figures presented for student performance in Reading (88.4%) is twice that of their performance in Writing (44%) at the 9-12 level in SY11-12; one might expect the consortium to achieve different patterns of growth for these two areas.
- The problem with projecting uniformity is further illustrated in their figures for college enrollment. All districts are projected to achieve the same percentage in performance each year of the grant, eg, all hitting 50% in SY2012-2013. The movement from the baseline year to a 50% result for each district, based on figures and projection presented, meant different performance patterns for the districts, ranging from a -1.5% decline in one district to a 25% increase in another. Uniformity in SY2012-2013 would actually mean decreased performance in one district.
- Further, the consortium has not demonstrated how or the extent to which making grants available from RTTTD funds will result in a long-term solution for the issue of college enrollment.

There seems to be absolute reliance on APVs reforming education in East Texas 1A. The extent to which this vision is likely to result in projected outcomes has not been strongly argued. The goals are ambitious but perhaps the strategy for achieving them may be further developed.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	**15**	**5**

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A's use of the Texas Education Agency's Academic Excellence Indicator System indicated that the applicant has had a variable record of success over the past four years on selection criteria B(1).

Their best performance is on graduation rates and graduating College Ready Graduates.

They assert that all four districts have maintained 100% graduation rates for the past four years.

A portion of these graduates were College Ready Graduates; the exact number was not revealed.

The applicant's performance on the measure of College Ready Graduates reveals that two districts achieved Gold performance 3 out of 4 years. Two other districts achieved Gold performance one out of four years; no information was presented for one district's performance across the four years on this measure. In 2011 three of the five districts recorded Gold Performance.

The applicant's performance on the College Ready measure can be seen as illustrative of a general pattern amongst the districts of the consortium: one district is stronger than the others, though its performance also fluctuates along with the others; one district seems to be doing less well than the others.

The applicant suggested that each district would help the other; however, East Texas 1A did not maximize the opportunity to demonstrate how they would achieve ambitious and significant reforms in its persistently lowest-achieving schools. For example, while each district was shown to have experienced some measure of success within certain subject areas at different points in the four years, no such information was presented in favor of the persistently lowest achieving district. Yet only one strategy, of providing additional ESL classes, was explicitly highlighted to address an Academically Unacceptable rating.

East Texas 1A already has systems in place that make performance data available to students, parents and educators. There is no indication

- of how well these work,
- how much use target audience make of them,
- or how to maximize and/or improve target audience's use of the systems.

Therefore, while East Texas 1A demonstrates a clear record of success in graduating all its students in the past four years, it does not demonstrate a clear prior record of success and conditions for reform.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	**5**	**4**

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A's meets at least the minimum in transparency on actual personnel and non-personnel salaries, and expenditures. This information is available as hard copy and on the web. In addition, the applicant states that other types of information, such as budgets information of federal grants, receipts and expenditure by departments, are similarly available.

Further sources of information on salaries can be found in AEIS reports.

Copies of salary schedules for each district in the consortium are provided in the Appendices of the application.

This degree of transparency supports confidence in the consortium's practice and investments as they utilize RTTD funds to improve the districts.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	**10**	**5**

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A's application indicates sufficient autonomy as required by the grant to implement personalized learning environments.

- They are confident in the consortium's ability to act on their decision to implement IPVs.
- They highlight that each district is autonomous and can make decisions on grants and their implementation.

- They do not foresee any barriers in linking student achievement or growth to teachers, and determining student achievement or growth.
- Each district provided a list of teachers' signature in support of the grant.
- The mayors of two districts and a Justice of the Peace of one district have provided written support of the application.

They have not discussed how they will measure and chart student growth, and how they will link and measure this in relation to teachers' performance.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) declined to comment on East Texas 1A's application.

- The applicant opened their application by highlighting that they formed their consortium and applied because the TEA is not applying for RTTT grant and has not received these funds in the past. The ramifications of this are unclear.

There may be sufficient autonomy to implement personalized learning environments in Texas 1A; it is less evident that there are successful conditions in place that will safeguard successful implementation.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	**10**	**4**

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

There is evidence of meaningful support from teachers across the consortium expressed in long lists of signatures. (None of the districts are collective bargaining districts.)

There is some evidence of civic support for one district in particular; two districts had letters of support from their mayor.

The consortium met with stakeholders to decide whether they should apply and how the funds should be used. It is implied that all stakeholders who met with the five districts went to their school board meeting to request approval to apply. This suggests commitment by these stakeholders to the proposal.

The applicant did not delineate who the stakeholders were in each case, and did not illustrate how interaction and feedback from each stakeholder was used to develop the proposal.

East Texas 1A did not demonstrate meaningful engagement with their stakeholders in the development of the proposal and it is difficult to assess the extent to which there was meaningful support for it.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

There is an implicit logic running through the application which suggests that East Texas 1A believes that by focusing on college-and-career readiness of their graduates, the districts will also address other areas for students' academic progress. It seems East Texas 1A arrived at this decision having considered their track record in graduation rates; they seem to want to build on their excellent record of success in graduation rates across all the districts in the last four years.

They plan on making access to and the use of technology central to their approach, and combining this with the use of IPVs to meet individual student need. A number of other additional ideas are listed by each district, but these, along with the use of IPVs, are not developed to illustrate one comprehensive approach to reform.

Though not explicitly argued, Texas 1A seem to have a good rationale for their focus on technology to achieve good academic results in their consortium. The logic seems to be that, because they are all rural, with high levels of poverty, increasing students' access to and use of computers will provide them with opportunities beyond the limitations of their localities.

One district illustrated notable ingenuity in maximizing the use of technology as a central strategy. Laptops are provided to students in College classes. This fosters more project-based learning assignments in classrooms and students are allowed to take laptops home. While East Texas 1A did not provide evidence of the results, they maintained that this increased

grades while also preparing students for college.That this district also plans to continue and combine other initiatives with the RTT-D grant to focus on projects that have begun to show good results, indicates the strength of this approach.

All the districts have incorporated the use of technology as a central strategy, for example, personalizing learning via technology modes; using technology to increase achievement; increasing access to technology purchasing portable computer labs for enhanced technology.

There is a clear sense that the use of technology is central to East Texas 1A 's approach. There is limited discussion of how IPVs and other subsidiary strategies will work; rather there seems to be more a belief in the IPV product and what it purports to be able to achieve.

Further, perhaps East Texas 1A's focus on their strength overtook the opportunity to investigate their weaknesses. Their rationale for how they decided on their needs is not thoroughly convincing. For example, they maintain that they came together because all were similar in demographics: rural, poor, similar challenges. Further, they identified Math and Reading as the gaps in performance between African Americans and Whites, and Hispanics and Whites, and surmised that they 'had no idea that the gaps would be this identical'.

The evidence that they presented strongly suggested that although all the districts were poor, the district with the highest percentage of African American students (and also the highest combined percentage of African American and Hispanic students) showed the highest levels of economic disadvantage. Further, it appeared that students' educational experiences across the five districts may be different, or at least, students' educational experiences were producing differential results.

Towards the end of the application there is passing acknowledgement that although they are similar there needs are different when they came to make decisions about the budget.

They do have different needs: there is a marked difference in student outcomes by subpopulation across the consortium. The district with the highest percentage of white students generally recorded the best performance across the three main variables presented; the district with the second highest white population was next. It is to be noted that success in the consortium's College Readiness measure is best demonstrated in districts with the highest white populations. Performance was patchy for the predominantly black district and in the district where numbers were about equally distributed for all three subgroups. No record was presented in the district where the split was about nearly equal for Hispanics and whites. If the consortium plans on focusing on College Readiness, then it might have been beneficial to demonstrate an awareness of the differential performance amongst themselves, and addressed how they planned to increase the participation of nonwhite groups in the overall success on that measure.

Similarly, while they have different composition of subpopulations, East Texas 1A highlight that they will be doing the same things to address what they have identified as common problems. However, perhaps, a district that has had a recent stark increase in non-English speaking students might have different challenges from a district that has not had this, and is in fact predominantly white. Furthermore, while a rationale is provided, explaining the gap for Hispanics (that they were primarily newly arrived non-English speaking immigrants), none is given for African American students. It is, therefore, uncertain what informs the consortium's decisions, really for both groups, and especially for African Americans. Further, it is notable that while the consortium will provide more math classes to address the need of African American students, they will be 'increasing the rigor for all Math classes'.

Generally speaking, then, East Texas 1A's approach to needs analysis is not convincing, and lacks attention to closing the achievement gap where identified. Its logic behind reform may be credible but it is somewhat implicit. Together with the limited discussion of how IPVs will be implemented, East Texas 1A does not present a high-quality plan for delivering personalized learning environments.

There is not a strong sense that they have a holistic understanding of how all the separate activities to be undertaken within individual districts constitute a whole program of reform that will deliver equity for all students.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score

(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	8

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A has a clear understanding of personalized learning environments (PLE) and how they might be used to improve teaching and learning. The consortium will provide students with Professional Learning Communities, Technology Buddies and Mentors. The Professional Learning Community model selected focus on establishing student-centered, technology-enriched learning environments, particularly to address math and literacy. The consortium also propose using a challenging STEM curriculum along with the use of a 1:1 computer initiative toward the same end. These two strategies speak to high quality content and instructional approaches, including high quality digital content, with the potential to provide personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development for students. They should also provide mechanisms to provide training and support to students that will ensure that they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

The consortium expects that mentors, together with the use of IPVs, will work with students at the start of the school year to develop the goals students wish to pursue that year and for the future. IPVs are expected to enable the updating of data and monitoring in between, personalized learning based on student's current knowledge and skills, critical learning academic content, and allow the student to pursue goals linked to his/her chosen college and/or career. IPV Learning Maps and Dashboards are expected to help identify gaps and enable students will be able to pursue learning and development goals.

East Texas 1A places an emphasis on IPVs delivering the results they expect. They do not provide many illustrations or examples suggesting how IPVs will deliver these results. In the primary example they provide, when mentors use IPVs, the consortium suggest that this will be 'at the beginning of the year [to] help students develop goals ... for the school year and future goals'. Especially because they do not indicate how many times initial plans will be revisited and what will happen during development of goals at any stage, their intended use of IPV at this time, seems a more conscripted, rather than dynamic approach.

The idea that 'IPV Learning Maps and Dashboards will help identify gaps and students will be able to pursue learning and development goals' also raises questions about the extent to which IPV provide personalized learning recommendations students can use to assist their development and goals; this is not addressed fully. Further aspects of Selection Criterion C such as (a) (i; ii; iv; v) and (b) (v) were also not addressed.

East Texas 1A presented a clear understanding of PLEs and suggested some very good examples of strategies for creating these. These included IPVs; the consortium seems highly reliant on IPVs delivering desired results; however, the direct linking and illustrating of how IPVs will be deployed is limited in the application; this challenges the ability to assess the the likely impact and use of IPVs amongst students and therefore desired results. This absence challenges the extent to which the plan can be judged as high-quality.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	13

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A revealed good strategies for improving learning and teaching by personalizing the learning environment in order to provide all students the support to graduate college-ready.

It is noteworthy that Texas1A intend 'to lead the community to function as action researchers keeping a close eye on students' interests and their progress, and engaging in collaborative enquiry to accelerate the learning curve of everyone in the school'.

Principals suggest that they will be proactive and involved in creating in their learning communities and in creating PLEs. For example, they intend to

- model best practice,
- support teachers to develop best practices
- provide professional development targeted at advancing teacher content knowledge and common assessment
- implement technology leadership that distributes responsibility within each district and
- emphasize mentoring and collaboration.

Together with employing the districts' RtI three tiers instructional strategies, their 1:1 student computer initiative - and other initiatives mentioned in C1, as well as measuring and assessing teacher effectiveness by various means, including district evaluation systems, the consortium reveals some good ideas for responding to Selection Criteria C2.

The plan lacks supporting evidence and does not explicitly align each selection subcriteria with their plan nor provide timelines and deliverables.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	**15**	**8**

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has highlighted their policies and practices.

- GIT (the steering committee) is only in place as it affects the grant itself.
  - The actual details of how GIT would support the consortium were not delineated; nothing further was said in this regard.
  - They however highlight that they agreed to a philosophy of how students should be treated - with fairness, respect, and policies that reinforce goals.

They described their agreement for flexibility and autonomy in working with one one another. They stated,

> In no way with the consortium be able dictate to the individual member district as to the governance of its campuses. The individual school leadership teams will have flexibility and autonomy over factors such as schedules, calendars, personnel, and district level budgets, etc

The districts have interoperable data systems.

Teachers and administrators have comprehensive access to student data to assist planning and instruction.

When the applicant addressed the issue of student mastery, they highlighted that student grades reflect mastery of the curriculum, and do not reflect the standing of students relative to other students.

- They did not go on to address how students would demonstrate mastery of content in multiple ways, at multiple times when they were ready.

They addressed the requirement of resource and practice adaptability with reference to federal and state laws that legally obliged them to do so, and affirmed that the five districts will

- promote effective learning and teaching
- incorporate new technology
- be environmentally sustainable
- support community involvement.

Technology and supporting infrastructures seemed central to accomplishing these claims, as they highlighted that 'technology infrastructure in the districts will be ubiquitous, redundant, abundant, equal, and adaptable, assuring all learners have access. How they would use technology to accomplish the goals identified, especially in relation to students, was not clearly illustrated.

The applicant has some policies and infrastructures in place. The extent to which these policies and practices support project implementation through providing comprehensive policies and infrastructure so that every student, educator and level of the education system have the support and resources when and where need them has not been thoroughly established. They did not present illustrative evidence in relation to each of the subcriterion of this selection criterion.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	**10**	**3**

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

It was difficult to discern the the applicant's response to this selection criterion as there was not a narrative headed D2.

There is evidence in the application that East Texas 1A have data systems that are interoperable. The systems contain human resources data, student information, budget information, instructional data, etc. The applicant also highlights that technology infrastructures in the districts will be ubiquitous, redundant, abundant, equal, and adaptable, assuring all learners have access.

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  - This suggests that educators and students will have access while in schools.
  - Where they have access teachers and administrators can use software systems to assess student performance
  - It does not address access by parents.
  - It does not address student and educator access when not in school
  - it does not address technical support for all stakeholders in or out of school.
  - It does not discuss technology systems that allow parents and students to export data.

While East Texas 1A will invest in technology such that it supports learning in school, its description of their infrastructure here does not evidence a fully developed system that users will be able to use at their convenience.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**11**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas A1 has identified ways to monitor and assess its program, and to publicize information on its use of funds.

- To monitor their program East Texas 1A will analyze data from each program monitoring assessment for performance assessment of their program. Monitoring for student success, successful implementation and integration throughout the five districts will be ongoing throughout the school year; they also mention a yearly needs assessment survey.
- Teachers and administrators in each district will meet monthly to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of the program and make changes as necessary. The GIT will meet quarterly to discuss and evaluate the overall progress of the grant and grant goals.
- They will share information on the use of grant funds through news releases in newspaper, radio stations and each district's website.

These are good examples of strategies to implement rigorous continuous improvement.

They have not provided sufficient information on the collection, management and evaluation of specific datasets that will be used to measure implementation and progress.

Therefore East Texas 1A's strategy for implementing continuous rigorous improvement may lack some rigor.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A has identified a strategy for ongoing communication that will allow them to engage with internal and external stakeholders.

- A person with good experience in working with grant programs is responsible for coordinating the overall communication strategy
- Two further individuals have specific responsibility for reporting on financial matters
- They will gather feedback through survey and other evaluation instruments designed specifically for this grant.

There is limited information on how feedback will flow outwards to various stakeholders. There is also not a strong sense of how all stakeholders can enter and impact the implementation and improvement process if their input is not solicited by the consortium.

East Texas 1A's strategy is somewhat compromised.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A did not address all the requirements of Selection Criteria E. It is not clear that they delineated 12 - 14 performance measures. Documentation is incomplete. Their narrative does not provide a rationale for performance measures provided; it also does not provide a pointed discussion of how those measures will provide rigorous, timely and formative leading information tailored to their plan and theory of action regarding their implementation success or areas of concern.

Overall, East Texas 1A's narrative indicated that the principals and teachers in all five districts of the consortium are considered effective when measured against district evaluations; it did not indicate whether teachers and principals were also considered highly effective.

Documentation provided indicate the number and percentage of participating students, by subgroup; these students are served by teachers and principals who are both effective and highly effective

Subpopulation

PreK-3

(a) The consortium proposed Phonemic Awareness as an age-appropriate measure of students' academic growth.They provided a good rationale for this measure.

- C-Pall+ and TPRI data indicated that this was a problem area.
- They quoted research that supported the importance of phonemic awareness for reading acquisition.

However, their response did not delineate how their strategy would provide rigorous, timely, and informative leading information tailored to their proposed plan and theory of action regarding their implementation success.(b) They proposed using FITNESSGRAM as a strategy to address the requirement for at least one age-appropriate non-cognitive indicator of growth.

- They described and discussed the benefits of the strategy.
- They did not clearly discuss how they will specifically use it as an indicator of growth at PK-3 level.

East Texas 1A's response is incomplete.

4-8

(a) The applicant partially met this criterion.

- The applicant provided the number and percentage of students who are on track to college-and career readiness.
- They did not provide figures on number and percentage of students by subgroup.

They anticipate figures to rise from 47% to 90%

- They expect an initial increase of 3% at the end of the first year of implementation; 5% in the second year then 10% in each of the following three years.

(b) The applicant proposed Cognitive Literacy strategy instruction as its strategy, and '% of Reading Comprehension Standard Met' as a grade-appropriate academic leading indicator of successful implementation of its plan.They provide a discussion of the usefulness of Cognitive Literacy.

Cognitive Literacy was also proposed as an optional strategy for PK-3.

- They did not provide a rationale that is explicitly linked to their proposal.
- They did not demonstrate how Cognitive Literacy instruction will contribute to specific goals they wish to achieve in their proposal.
- They anticipate a 14% increase in the first year of implementation, 10% in the second and third years, and to be able to sustain a 100% record in the three final years of the project.

(c) The applicant proposed Fitnessgram as a grade-appropriate health or social-emotional strategy

- They anticipate 100% success in every year of implementation.
- They did not discuss a rationale for this strategy.
- They did not discuss how Fitnessgram will contribute to specific goal they wish to achieve in their proposal.

The applicant did not address all the requirements of this section.

9-12

(a) The applicant presented the required information.

(b) The information presented is incomplete.The document does not disaggregate number and percentage of participating students by subgroup.

(c) The applicant proposed administering the Readistep Test or PSAT through the College Board to determine college - and/or career-readiness for students.

- They do not identify a strategy, rationale or discussion of how their strategy will provide information to assist their implementation and the achievement of their goals.

(d) The applicant proposed using IPV based on state mandated assessments, to increase student overall scores on each tested course by 10% each year; this includes writing, reading math science and social studies.

(e) The applicant proposed using FITNESSGRAM.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	**5**	**0**

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

No response was submitted for this section of the application.

The applicant did not provide on information on any of the requirements at this section of the application.

Given the amibiguity evidenced at D2, for example, there is not a strong sense that they have thought through a plan for professional development and activities that employ technology. Further, the applicant speaks of the difficulty of forming working partnerships.

Perhaps there is not at this time a plan that addresses the requirements of this selection criterion. This negatively affected their ability to project ideas for evauating the RTTD funded activities.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**4**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A total budget request is $5,322,000 which gives the districts approximately $2092 per student. They highlighted that this figure is insufficient for their purposes and that individual districts will be supplementing college and career readiness with local, state and federal funds.

They did not identify funds besides RTTD grant funding.

They did not explicitly state what were one-time investments. They highlighted however, that due to differing accounting procedures an item may have been coded to either equipment or supplies.

- They listed under equipment and supplies items that appear to be one-off investments, for example:
  - oven, refrigerator, freezer, grill, mobile device carts, laptop carts, computer tablets, software, including data management systems, laptop portable lab, iPad portable lab, infrastructure to accommodate technology.

Personnel was the category that received the highest amount. This spend was on: College and Career counselors, technology personnel, CTE instructors, Grant Managers, Bus Drivers and Fine Arts Instructors.

Equipment was the second highest category in the budget at just over £1m; combined with supplies this figure rose to just over $2m. T

- The equipment budget was allocated to fund most districts' 1:1 Computer Initiative and help expand the infrastructure to accommodate the increase in technology; one district, additionally would fund a hospitality/culinary kitchen.
- The supplies budget was allocated to fund some of the performance measures, research-based curriculum, college textbooks and testing material, other testing materials, online remediation courses to close the achievement gaps

While they did not delineate information as required by the selection criteria, the allocation of funds to acquire technology and expand infrastructure accommodate it, is consistent with their general goal of using IPVs to reform education, to close the achievement gap and to increase college-and-career readiness through technology.

Because their reform agenda rested so heavily on technology, the allocation of funds for this amongst the district is of seminal importance.

Given that the equipment and supplies budget held one-off investments, the allocation of funding to technology within district would be important.

Their rationale for the distribution of the funds ($2092 x number of students) therefore seemed to have a notable impact.

- The differential between the district with highest budget (Joaquin at $1496,000) and the district with the lowest budget (Lanville at $320,000) was about $1.2m.
- All the districts that received over $1m allocated higher percentages of their grant allowance to equipment/supplies, the higher the amount, the higher the percentage allowance (from their highest: 48.49%; 42.6% and 35.3% respectively). The districts with under $1m allocated 25% and 23.6 % to equipment/supplies.

The impact of this is especially notable given the following effect:

- Joaquin, the district with the best performance record, which is also predominantly white (81.4% - and 12% Hispanics), with the second lowest student economic disadvantage, (a figure of 56%, compared to the district with the highest student economic disadvantage, a figure of 94.3%) receives the highest amount of money ($1496,000).
- Lanville, the district with the highest student economic disadvantage (94.3%), which also is predominantly black (62.6% - and 21.8% Hispanics), with a fluctuating performance record, received the least amount of money ($320,000).
- The district, therefore, in which 84.4% of its students had need to close the achievement gap, and therefore perhaps need of such things as online remediation courses and technology secure and maintain programs like the 1:1 computer initiative, had the least amount of money to spend on technology.

This finding is borne out in their budgets. Joaquin allocated $725,600 on equipment and supplies, wisely targeting PK-12 for significant investments in technology and wireless infrastructure with the needed servers, switches and wiring in all classrooms to accommodate additional computers laptops and technological services. These significant investments contribute to long-term sustainability of personalized learning environments. With this vision and investments, It seems highly possible that Joaquin could realize its truly ambitious goals of laying a modern blueprint for raising student achievement while achieving college-and-career readiness.

Lanville makes claim to similar goals to Joaquin, in its desires to increase access to technology, higher education and workforce certifications. They target 25% of their budget, $80, 000, on PK-5 to purchase computer tablets, software remediation programs, data management systems and other technology instructional tools to serve students in PK-5. Lanville's budget is wisely focused on intervention programs to increase math and reading levels, needs and gaps the consortium highlighted. However, Lanville does not seem to benefit as much from a truly ambitious vision and investments that contribute to the long-term sustainability of personalized learning environments.

On the other hand, Carlisle, received over $1.3m. East Texas 1A had emphasized earlier in the application the adverse impact on Carlisle's recent academic performance record arising from a sudden increase in non-English speaking students: the population suddenly became more of less equally split between whites and Hispanics. This is of particular importance as closing achievement gap in Reading amongst Hispanics was an identified goal of the consortium. However, a corresponding emphasis was not clearly evident in the discussion or the allocation of funds in this budget. Rather, East Texas 1A discusses the 1:1 computer initiative as a strategy to shift students from an industrial world to a technological world, and also make them career-ready; there is a focus and very good approach to college-readiness, and the use of after-school initiatives to promote social and emotional benefits, and engagement with school. There was no discussion of a strategy specifically and clearly addressing the achievement gap or improving Reading.

Scrutiny of budget allocations suggests that the use of funds within the consortium, does not demonstrate or fully address one of the applicant's primary needs; it also does not address an explicit goal of the RTTD, which is to address and decrease the achievement gap where identified.

East Texas 1A budget may contribute to college-and-career ready high school graduates. It also may be reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal; they indicate that it might not but do not identify the funds to supplement the shortfall. Whether or not there is a shortfall, the rationale for their distribution of the RTTD request amount may have benefited from further scrutiny. As it is presented, they do not seem to have selected a rationale for the distribution of RTTD funds, or to have identified further funds, that would enable all its districts to benefit from strategies that would ensure long-term sustainability of personalized learning environments.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	**10**	**4**

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A highlighted that they considered the sustainability of their projects in the planning phase of this proposal.

- They maintained that their current programs are based in the basic concepts of sustainability and individual responsibility to contribute to implementation, and that their current successful programs underlie all sustainability practices happening around their campuses.
- They also argued that In small school districts such as theirs, stakeholders expect districts to continue a project that works, regardless of the cost. It is implied that this expectation, that successful projects will be continued, places a responsibility on them to sustain successful RTT-D projects.
- They identified two specific strategies in support of their deliberations on sustainability.
    - Instructional Practice by challenging teachers to attain and model growth through continuous improvement will help the districts show improvement in the students' IPV.
    - Using the LASERS approach[,] Sustainability is a built-in element.

These claims were not substantiated and/or sufficiently discussed.

- They did not reference a budget for the three years after the grant.
- There was not a discussion of examples of current programs based in the basic concepts of sustainability and individual responsibility and how their current successful programs underlie all sustainability practices happening around their campuses.
- Illustrations of stakeholders' expectations safeguarding sustainability of current successful projects were not provided.
- Further, they did not discuss and reference financial and other support from State and local government leaders. The Appendices contained a letter from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) declining to comment on East 1A's application; there was not a letter of support from the TEA.

However, the Appendices contained letters of required support for two of the five districts; one of these also had a letter of support from the local Business Men Club. In addition, there was evidence elsewhere in the application of this district's practice of combining different initiatives in ways that sustained successful projects.

Also where LASER is discussed, at an earlier point in the application, their approach to sustainability is shown to be rooted in engendering comprehensive improvement as a community of professionals actively focused on their practice.

As a consortium East Texas 1A did not present a high-quality plan for the sustainability of the project goals after the term of the grant; however, there is some evidence that they could improve and sustain better contexts for student achievement.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**3**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

1.Sustainable Partnerships

East Texas 1A did not propose how they would integrate private and public resources in a coherent and sustainable partnership to augment schools' resources to meet student needs as identified for the Competitive Preference Priority.

They highlighted instead that there are very few ways to build sustainable partnerships in a rural consortium such as theirs.

One partnership was created in response to RTTD goals.

- All five districts partner with postsecondary institutions

They did not reference or provide a description of their partnership with postsecondary institutions at this section of their application. However, they described it elsewhere in the application, where they revealed that the postsecondary

institutions 'have verbally agreed to help all the districts in any way they can will college placement tests, dual credit, online or distance learning classes, college representatives speaking with students and parents, etc.'.

This partnership speaks to their focus on college-and-career readiness, and less so to the criteria identified at this section of the application.
Their description of this partnership also does not strongly establish that it is coherent.
It is difficult to assess the extent to which it is sustainable.

East Texas 1A presented another kind of partnership, which seems to predate RTTD, but appears to be aligned with the goals expressed at this section of the application.

- Four of the five districts work with Head Start
- The fifth district has its own Daycare provision, started by a previous Pregnancy, Education and Parenting grant

The district with the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students is included in the partnership with Head Start (discerned from evidence presented elsewhere in the application).

The applicant did not provide a description of their work with Head Start, but it is identified as an early learning program. East Texas 1A highlighted that each of the five districts provide before-and-after school remediation services for their students, and delineated a list of these services.

It seems Head Start may augment schools' resources to provide additional supports that address the social, emotional or behavioral needs of participating students. That the individual partnerships with Head Start (and use of the Pregnancy, Education and Parenting grant) predate the RTTD proposal may be taken as some indication of the consortium's ability to sustain the partnership.

The evidence of a coherent and sustainable partnership is not strongly presented; however, there is a suggestion of such a partnership and that it meets the criteria of this section.

2. 10 Population-level Desired Results for Students

East Texas 1A identified 10 strategies;

- 1. Fitnessgram – The districts selected this program to combat obesity in our students where the majority come from low-socio economic backgrounds.
- 2. Language classes – The districts want to provide language classes the non-English speaking parents. This will help the families in the social lives in the United States and will also allow them to take a bigger part in the children's education.
- 3. Working with Head Start, Daycares and PK classes to make sure children enter kindergarten prepared to succeed in school4. Making sure children exit third grade reading at grade level by providing teachers with needed resources to teach the children and progress monitor to determine success. Change strategies as needed.
- 5. Provide education opportunities in order for students graduate from high school college- and career-ready
- 6. Computer classes for community members to teach anyone wishing to attend about computers and how to use them.
- 7. Organize student bodies to help with community clean up days to help build pride in their communities.
- 8. Provide parenting classes for anyone who wishes to attend to help improve parenting skills.
- 9. Sponsor food/blood drives through the school to help teach civic responsibility.
- 10. Bullying prevention program to stop bullying and harassment in schools and elsewhere

The desired results of these strategies are generally vaguely expressed. Some, for example, Food/Blood drives to teach civic responsibility, and Improving Parenting Skills, are not clearly aligned with and support broader RTTD goals.

3. Measuring, Monitoring and Maximizing Partnerships

East Texas 1A discussed the benefits of having good partnerships.

They did not address the specific requirements of this section.

4. Partnerships Integrating Education and other Services

East Texas 1A argued that they will emphasize the use of IPVs as a means to more quickly identify and intervene in problems. They suggest that problems will be addressed by staff or by other professionals brought into the school.

They did not describe how the partnership would integrate education and other services in support of student needs.

5. Capacity Building in Participating Schools

East Texas 1A consortium highlighted that 'there are not too many social service agencies available nor are there many business to look to for help'.

- They explained how they decided on student need: a large Hispanic population informed the decision for offering language classes. No further details of an inventory was provided.
- 'Parents and the community members of the district are relied upon to assist the districts'. This seems an asset, but was not explicitly described as such. It is not clear the extent to which this also will be used to engage parents and families in decision-making about solutions to improve results.
- The consortium will look to building their capacity themselves by learning from one another; goals are aligned to assist this.
- They will use existing policies and procedures within their individual districts to address student needs.
- The GIT, comprising members of all five district will evaluate progress.

Although East Texas 1A listed these strategies, they did not describe how the partnership - of education and other services - would meet the requirements of this selection criterion.

6. Annual Ambitious Achievable Performance Measures

East Texas 1A presented the overall goals of their proposal and discussed strategies for realizing these. They intend to adopt the Texas College and Career Readiness standards, and ensure that all teachers and leaders have the requisite training and continued professional support for implementing the standards and assessments listed. They also listed desired results by population group.

It is not clear which, or, whether all, of their performance measures are listed.

Desired results may have been more precisely expressed where they are listed alongside Population-Level Desired Results. Where Performance measures are listed and quantified, (for example, African Americans - Reading) these desired results are ambitious but perhaps not achievable.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Not Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

East Texas 1A did not provide a coherent and comprehensive vision for reform.

Some key aspects of the requirements of a high-quality plan were not addressed.

The application was incomplete.

Evidence required was not always provided in support of claims, where they were requested.

There were some good ideas evidenced in the application, and in fact clear evidence within individual districts of truly ambitious and achievable results. Joaquin's budget, for example, speaks to this, providing evidence of dynamic investments which served as a catalyst for immediate and long-term reform. Tenaha's strategy also illustrated how their approach could accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning, while concurrently addressing more long-term goals of college-and-career readiness. Further, Tenaha's attention to combining funds and initiatives to support the continuation of successful projects speaks to their sustainability of personalized learning environment.

However, in the district that the consortium reported having particular challenges arising from subgroup needs, of a sharp increase in the numbers of non-English speaking students, the budget did not convincingly highlight how the district would allocate funds to address Reading needs and decrease the achievement gap in this subpopulation.

While using IPVs was identified as a strategy for addressing individual need, generally speaking, it appeared that there was less grappling with the need to decrease achievement gaps.

Given the strong links between the consortium's vision and college-and-career readiness through investments in technology, it seemed possible that achievement gaps across the districts as a whole could increase rather than decrease with the implementation of this plan.

The nature of investment in technology meant that districts with more students had more money to invest in one-off procurements which also supported long-term sustainability. East Texas1A's rationale for funding resulted in an anomaly where the district with the best record of performance and the second lowest economic need amongst students, received the highest percentage of the funds. It allocated nearly 50% of its budget , the highest budget amount amongst the districts, on equipment and supplies.

The district with highest economic need and greatest numbers of subgroup populations with academic needs, would receive the least amount of money. Its budget, perhaps, understandably focused on strategies to immediately decrease achievement gaps, but these did not appear to offer many long-term sustainable solutions for personalized learning. Its strategies were therefore compromised in terms of RTTD goals. Its 25% investment in technology was strikingly limited when compared to the district with the most students and largest budget.

Perhaps their rationale for funding, combined with not sourcing further funding, inhibited the the potential for all districts to generate and/or participate in ambitious, achievable, and sustainable results. The plan did not convincingly demonstrate that all members of the consortium had ambitious and achievable strategies that would lead to long-term sustainable personalized learning environments and achievement amongst all students.

Total	**210**	**94**

Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0332TX-3 for Teneha ISD

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	**10**	**6**

(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant does articulate an ambitous vision of an improved education system, the applicant did not provide a comprehensive view of this vision. Rather, the focus is one-sided in its focus on college and career readiness. While this is undoubetly an important and crucial feature in the plan, the applicant fails to articulate a comprehensive vision beyond this.

Further, the applicant does not fully articulate how they (the consortium of schools) will promise personalized student support. This is absent from any discussion of the overall plan. Differentiated and targetted strategies supporting individualized learning is lacking.

The applicant does discuss the 4 educational assurance areas but does without digging deep into any of the areas. For example, the applicant does not articulate how it will foster great teaching or data systems. These core essentials are built into the application more so as an assumption.

While the applicant gives a detailed description of each LEA in the consortium, there is little mention of how each school will benefit from the plan. Rather, a demographic overview of each school is given without detail into how a comprehensive vision will impact each of the 5 LEAs.

The applicant does articulate a clear and credible approach to how they will increase student acheivement by focusing on college and career readiness. The applicant does a thorough job explaining an overall approach to deepending student learning through increased focused on college and career readiness as well as provides good examples of why and how RTTT funding will help each school- the applicant does a great job explaining the 'need.'

(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	**10**	**6**

(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not illustrate a thorough and complete approach to implementation that includes how the applicant selected schools to participate. There is no narrative describing the process used to select schools in any way. The applicant therefore, does not provide a clear picture of the proposal that will support high quality implementation. There is little dicussion that helps answer the question of 'how' the reform will happen.

The applicant does thoroughly list the schools that will participate in grant activities and has completed the chart reflecting the total number of students from each group- this helps provide clarity on the total number of participating students as well as provides some level of detail on how focusing on these students will help meet with implementation and reform goals.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	**10**	**2**

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has not included A(3) and there is not any discussion focused on how the proposal would support district-wide reform in the overall application. The applicant appears to have skipped over this section in the application but more importantly the application does not address the selection criteria asking applicants to discuss the extent to which the reform propsal will be expanded to support district-wide need. While the applicant does discuss reform in the 5 districts within the consortium, the applicant does not elaborate on a plan for expansion and scaling reform. The applicant does

reference (in section b1) that each dsitricts has agreed to help other districts with reform efforts but these few sentences do not amount to a high-quality plan or how the plan itself will be brought to scale.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	**10**	**7**

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has presented a clear plan, founded in aggressive yet realistic annual goals based on the 4 areas in general. The applicant articulates growth measures year by year in each of the districts within the cosortium. However, the applicant has articulated as standard growth rate for each area that is exactly the same for every district, every year. Further, the applicant clearly addresses college enrollment as a major goal over the overall plan and explains how such goalswill grow each year of the grant period. The applicant does not make clear how or why the rates are ambitous yet realistic and why all the rates are the same for each district. For example, on the decreasing acheivement gaps criteria, the applicant notes standards in the last three years to average at around 78% for all subgroups yet the 2013 goal is 100%--this does not seem realistic. Therefore, while the applicant does a good job of articulating goals in each of the 4 areas and while they are generally ambitous and acheiveable as noted above, the second criteria goals fails to be realistic, jumping 12% in just one year.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	**15**	**7**

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant presents evidence that show each district has a clear record of success, the application provides little evidence about past reforms and how those reforms have increased student learning or equity. However, the applicant does thoroughly discuss, and gives evidence to support, making student performance data available to all stakeholders in a successful and highly productive way. For example, the applicant describes an information portal used to house student data that helps keep parents involved and parents updated. This is a strength within this section. However, given the applcant does not elaborate on its clear record of success with improving student outcomes beyond a list of recognition each district has received in addition to a lack of clarity on how and why signifcant reforms have a proven track record, this area of the application is weak.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	**5**	**3**

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant clearly describes how actual personnel salaries are available to the public, the application fails to mention how the districts provide a high level of transparency in its processes for reform. Specfically, there is no discussion of how investments or practices are made public. Therefore the applicant fails to address a large portion of this criteria though information on salaries is thorough.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	**10**	**5**

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

While the applicant clearly describes how state regulations will support change (mainly, there are no state statutes or regulations that will hinder change), the applicant does not clealry describe how state context will pave the way for reforms to be successfully implemented. The applicant does state there are no regulations in place that will hinder the proposal but fails to indicate how context will support successful implemenation of the proposal.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	**10**	**8**

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant gives a very clear and transparent picture of what conditions are in place to support implementation of the planned reforms by way of stakeholder engagement. Evidence of this includes a description of the collective bargaining process as well as processes already in place to foster stakeholder engagement. Teachers are on board as shown in the several appendices to the application and community members, parents, and local groups have showed their support for the changes. The applicant provides clear and strong evidence that stakeholders are engaged and are primed to support the reforms.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	**5**	**4**

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant gives a clear and thorough account of how and why the reforms will work in each of the districts as well as provides a clear picture of the gaps the plan will fill in each of the member districts.For example, the applicant writes that in the Carlisle ISD the overall school rating is below proficient as is only at Stage 1 AYP. Further, the applicant explains gaps in Laneville ISD centering on the lack of students who graduate college and career ready. The applicant provides a clear picture of the overall plan encompassing each district and then provides a rich summary of ways in which the plan will address the district-specific needs gaps. For example, in Carlisle ISD the applicant identifies 5 clear and comprehensive areas of change that include increasing the use of technology, decreasing achievement gaps in Math and focusing on college readiness. However, the applicant does not thoroughly describe how the personalized learning environments will be sustained and implemented.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	**20**	**10**

(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides an overall picture of how the consortium will make college and career readiness front and center when implementing their reform plans. For example, the applicant discusses a focus on STEM curriculum and IPV learning maps as well as an increased towards digital learning. However, the applicant fails to reference any potential accommodations for high-needs students and does not dig deep into how instruction will be targeted to provide differentiated and personalized curriculum for different student needs.Further, the applicant does not address selection criteria relating to how the districts will make sure students understand expectations, are able to understand how current academic work relates directly to future success or have access to diverse cultures. While the applicant discusses professional learning communities, there is little detail about how the communities will actually work to foster small group learning. While this section of the application gives a good overview of the plan it lacks detail and specificity that would make the answer richer and more complete. The applicant fails to provide a detailed picture of how personalized learning will be developed and executed and where frequently updated student data will be housed.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	**20**	**14**

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant presents a detailed plan in which it is clear improving instruction and teacher effectiveness is at the forefront but the response is lacking in a few key areas. The applicant discusses its plan to use a specifics model that will focus on literacy and how teachers will develop and share best practices. Further, the plan discusses the principals' role in being instructional leaders within each schools. The applicant provides an account of how evaluations will be used, though the response would benefit from a bit more detail in this particular area. The applicant provides a detailed account of how it will ensure sustainability of the reform plan through a focus on how each teacher and staff member will work to implement the plan and play a key role everyday. The applicant describes how teachers will adapt content and measure progress towards college-readiness goals. For example, the districts plan to use the LASER model to focus on instructional staff development in: leadership, standards-based instruction, effective instructional frameworks, reporting, and sustainability. The applicant digs deep into these areas and it is clear how instruction will be improved. The applicant notes that building-

level principals will serve as instructional leaders in their school and will model what it means to be actively engaged while being a willing learner. The applicant details how assessments will be used and how standards-based instruction will guide the overall instructional program. However, the applicant does not adequately address how content will be adapted and revised, nor how evaluations will be used to impact teaching and learning in a meaningful way.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	**15**	**12**

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant shows each district as well as the consortium as a whole approaches the reform plan from different perspectives but that there is a clear overall plan with the necessary infrastructure to support implementation. While each district will have autonomy over how the plan functions, the consortium share similar policies with respect to student attendance policies, behavioral expectations, and academic standards. All districts within the consortium will share a student data portal- all evidence of how the consortium will promote a similar set of rules and procedures for uniformity but also provide each district with the flexibility it needs to implement the plan effectively.The applicant explains how it will give students the opportunity to earn credit based on skill level as well as ensuring learning resources are available to all students. For example, the applicant discusses the implementation of new homework policies and how adults will take leadership roles to effectively implement the policies. Further, the applicant provides detail on how it will incorporate new technology such as the DMAC system that provides complete and secure web-based solutions for assessment data and tracking.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	**10**	**2**

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant appears to have not submitted section D2 with their application. Information supporting this criteria was found in a limited capacity in other parts of the appliation including discussion in section B regarding how parents will have access to student data. The applicant does discuss an information system but does not describe how the data will be made to make recommendations for additional student support. Overall this section does not appear to be addressed other than what can be garnered through other parts of the application. More information is needed regarding how the applicant will increase access to information and resources both in and out of school and how will support implementation. More information is also needed on how the applicant will work to ensure the consortium districts will uses data systems to support implementation.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	**15**	**10**

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant has clearly thought about how program success will be monitored on a regular basis but does not provide detail on how this will actually happen. Teachers and administrators will meet every month to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of the program showing the applicant has considered what are the most impactful processes and procedures that can be put in place to support continuous improvement. However, the applicant fails to adequately address how the applicant will share this information publically with the community.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	**5**	**5**

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant discusses how one integral member of staff, a Director of Academic Affairs, will be responsible for monitoring improvement and collecting best practices among the districts within the consortium. This serves as clear evidence that the applicant is committed to fostering ongoing communication both internally and externally as well as is prioritizing stakeholder engagement.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide performance measures that are ambitious yet achievable nor does the applicant provide rationale for choosing each measure. While more than 12 measures are clearly stated, the applicant has not included rationale for why those measures were chosen and how the measures will be tracked over time.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	**5**	**2**

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does not provide a clear and comprehensive vision for how the reform plan will support the effective use of time and resources to improve overall results. For example, while the applicant does explain that teachers and building level administrators will meet monthly to monitor progress no evidence is provided for how this will translate into meaningful evaluation of the overall program . Further, while the applicant does mention it will work with partners to improve the plan and rate of progress over time no detail or information is included for how the partnerships will support continous improve.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	**10**	**7**

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The budget section of this application is very strong: offering a thorough budgetary overview of the applicant's plan and provides a detailed picture of how the budget will support all parts of the reform plan. The budget is reasonable, it provides an adequate, though not wasteful, account of how federal funds will fully support the development of reform. For example, anticipated personnel costs align to the overall reform plan as do costs for increased use of technology but do not oversubscribe resources.

The narrative provides a thoughtful explanation for how the overall amount requested will affect each student on a per pupil basis. The application clearly breaks down how the requested amount will be broken down by category starting with personnel to professional development and related back to n other major parts of the grant will be funded (such as the infrastructure that will track student data). The application does clearly identify a project-level narrative by clearly stating who will be responsible for grant project management at the district-level. The itemized costs are detailed and comprehensive.

The budget lacks, however, in providing a clear set of priorities for funding- meaning, the application fails to articulate which parts of the budget are most important, having the most potential for reform. Further, the budget does not clearly show how infrastructure will be sustainable subsequent to the grant period nor does the budget describe how other funds will combine and/or impact the budget. The applicant did not clearly identify what expenditures would be one-time investments.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	**10**	**4**

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The budget, while it does mention a plan for sustainability, is not very specific about how sustainability will be achevied past the grant period. The applicants do not articulate a clear plan or discuss how other State and local government will contribute to the sustainability of the reform plan. The applicant state that the plan would be sustained after the four year grant period but do not provide a detailed explanation for how this will be done. The response does not include what assumptions were made for sustainbility subsequent to the grant period.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	**10**	**6**

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The applicant provides a coherent and comprehensive explanation for why and how it will build sustainable partnerships with local groups. The applicant provides reasonable rationale for why, given the rural nature of all 5 districts, it is difficult to build partnerships with larger organizations. However, the applicant details how the consortium would partner with local institutions of higher education, the local Head Start program, and before- and after-school programs.

The applicant offers at least 10 desired results targeted to student populations and relates directly back to the strength of the reform plan. For example, the plan included a program to increase computer skills for students and the list provided here relates back to these objectives through showing how partnerships will promote specific objectives such as increasing college readiness.

However, the applicant does not describe how partnerships would be sustained over time nor how they will be scaled to improve outcomes for the entire student population in the districts. Further, while the applicant does address the need to analyze individual student data and address specific needs of their specific student populations, the application does not present a detailed plan for how it plans to integrate services with the overall reform plan. The applicant does not articulate any performance measures by specific metrics. While a list is provided articulating overall goals, there is no clear plan for how those goals will be achieved and at what rate.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	**Met/Not Met**	**Met**

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The applicant does present a clear and coherent plan for how it will execute a thoughtful plan for reform. The applicant evidences its intention to elevate teacher effectiveness and increase the level of college readiness throughout professional development and targeted instruction. The application also addresses differentiated instruction through infrastructure that will support personalized learning.

Total	**210**	**122**